

EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA STATE BOARD[249]

Adopted and Filed

Pursuant to the authority of Iowa Code section 256I.4(9), the Early Childhood Iowa State Board hereby amends Chapter 1, “Early Childhood Iowa Initiative,” Iowa Administrative Code.

The Early Childhood Iowa Initiative was established by the General Assembly to create a partnership between communities and state-level partners to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of early care, education, health, and human services to support children prenatal through age five and their families.

The amendments to Chapter 1 update the rules to comply with 2016 Iowa Acts, chapter 1113. These amendments include updates to the definitions and references to the levels of excellence designation and removal of outdated language.

No waiver provision is included because the Early Childhood Iowa State Board has adopted a waiver policy for the initiative.

Notice of Intended Action for these amendments was published in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin on April 12, 2017, as **ARC 3011C**. The Early Childhood Iowa State Board received no comments on the Notice of Intended Action during the public comment period; therefore, no changes were made to the amendments as published under Notice of Intended Action.

The Early Childhood Iowa State Board adopted these amendments on June 2, 2017.

After analysis and review of this rule making, no impact on jobs has been found.

These amendments are intended to implement Iowa Code chapter 256I as amended by 2016 Iowa Acts, chapter 1113.

These amendments will become effective September 6, 2017.

The following amendments are adopted.

ITEM 1. Amend rule **249—1.3(256I)**, definition of “Designation,” as follows:

“Designation” means the status awarded by the state board to an early childhood Iowa area meeting the criteria ~~and the levels of excellence rating system~~ established by the state board.

ITEM 2. Adopt the following **new** definition of “Family support programs” in rule **249—1.3(256I)**:

“Family support programs” includes group-based parent education or home visiting programs that are designed to strengthen protective factors, including parenting skills, increasing parental knowledge of child development, and increasing family functioning and problem solving skills.

ITEM 3. Amend subrule 1.4(2) as follows:

1.4(2) The state board shall:

a. ~~Develop a levels of excellence rating system for~~ and implement a process for designating area boards.

~~(1) The rating system is the mechanism by which an area board is designated.~~

~~(2) The rating system shall include the following four levels: probation, compliant, quality, and model.~~

~~(3) The state board shall adopt criteria for each level.~~

~~(4) The state board shall review the process at the close of each designation cycle.~~

b. Adopt state-level indicators with input from area boards and the early childhood stakeholders alliance. The state board shall report on indicators each fiscal year and compare the data against baseline data and data from prior fiscal years as available. Indicators shall measure all result areas of the early care, health and education system.

c. Adopt minimum standards to promote equal access to services subject to the authority of the area boards.

d. Adopt guidelines and standards for services provided under a school ready children grant. All guidelines and standards shall be found in the online toolkit available on the official Web site of early childhood Iowa at www.earlychildhoodiowa.org.

e. In cooperation with the early childhood stakeholders alliance:

(1) Further the development of an early childhood integrated data system across state agencies and other partners.

(2) Develop guidance to identify and improve the quality of services in early care, health and education programs, including evidence-based practices.

(3) Promote other measures to advance the initiative.

ITEM 4. Amend subrule 1.6(2) as follows:

1.6(2) The state board may waive any of the minimum criteria referenced in Iowa Code section 256I.6, if it is determined that exceptional circumstances exist. The state board further defines exceptional circumstances to include ~~the following:~~

~~a. The~~ when the proposed change of boundaries creates hardship that reduces performance or quality of services within the area. The area board must provide compelling documentation of the hardship and clearly document the impact to performance or quality of services or both.

~~b. The area board is granted model level of performance within the levels of excellence rating system by the state board.~~

ITEM 5. Rescind and reserve rule ~~249—1.8(83GA,SF2088)~~.

[Filed 6/19/17, effective 9/6/17]

[Published 8/2/17]

EDITOR'S NOTE: For replacement pages for IAC, see IAC Supplement 8/2/17.